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The Mosaics of Nea Moni: An Imperial Reading

HENRY MAGUIRE

In a famous study, first published in 1948, Otto Demus outlined what he termed the "classical system" of middle Byzantine church decoration.[1] Essentially, this system divided the church into three horizontal zones. The first zone comprised the cupola and high vaults, the second zone included the squinches, pendentives, and upper parts of the intermediate vaults, and the third zone consisted of the lower vaults and the lower surfaces of the walls. Each zone was reserved for certain types of representation. The image of Christ in heaven, for example, was placed in the main cupola in the uppermost zone. The scenes of Christ's life appeared in the middle zone; Demus, following the Byzantine terminology,[2] called them the cycle of "feasts." Finally, the lowest zone was occupied by portrayals of the earthly saints. Of course, Demus' system is an abstraction, albeit a useful one, for when it comes to their mosaics and wall paintings no two middle Byzantine churches are precisely alike. There is an almost infinite variety in both the selection of the images and their placement. So, while Demus' system accounts for the features that middle Byzantine churches have in common, it does not help us account for their very significant differences.

One reason why the programs of middle Byzantine churches differed from one another is the simple fact that the buildings themselves were of various shapes and sizes, so that an arrangement that would fit into one church could not be accommodated easily into another. But another factor encouraged a diversity of programs: the individual images, the portraits of saints and the christological scenes, could take on different meanings according to their selection and arrangement. The individual images were like letters, which could be selected and recombined to make up different words. The scenes from Christ's life, for example, were not simple illustrations of the Gospel story, but they were able to take on other connotations besides, which might be connected with such external factors as the liturgy, the salvation of the dead, or even, as we shall see, political ideology. Another reason, therefore, why the programs in middle Byzantine churches were so varied is that they had different messages, which could change according to their contexts. The difficulty for the art historian, of course, is to determine which of the possible meanings may have been in the minds of contemporary (that is, Byzantine) creators and viewers of the monument—and the interpretations of creators and viewers were not necessarily the same. In order to interpret the images from the Byzantine perspectives, it is necessary to take into account the original context of the monument—was it the center of a healing cult, for example, or a private funerary church, or an imperial foundation? Then the selection of scenes and figures should be considered. Were some episodes of the life of Christ stressed, and were others left out? Was there an emphasis on any particular class of saints—healers, monks, soldiers? The iconographic bias of the specific scenes may also be revealing. In spite of a superficial impression of iconographic uniformity, Byzantine artists had considerable latitude in how they could portray any given episode, such as the Crucifixion or the Resurrection of Christ. Which version of the scene did they choose to depict, and why? Finally, what is the evidence of inscriptions—both the dedicatory inscriptions, if any, and the inscriptions on the scrolls held by prophets and saints?

Two churches, the Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki and Nea Moni on Chios, may serve to illustrate how the programs of images in Byzantine churches can be deciphered. Both buildings

[1] O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (London, 1948).

[2] In the 11th century, for example, John Mauropous wrote an *ekphrasis* Εἰς πίνακας μεγάλους τῶν ἑορτῶν: P. De Lagarde, ed., *Iohannis Euchaitorum Metropolitae quae in codice vaticano graeco 676 supersunt* (Göttingen, 1882), 2–8, nos. 2–11.

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were dedicated to the Virgin, and both date to the eleventh century, the Panagia ton Chalkeon to the year 1028,[3] or shortly after, and Nea Moni to approximately twenty years later. The church in Thessaloniki was built by the protospatharios Christopher, who was a katepan, a provincial commander.[4] The church on Chios was built by an emperor, Constantine IX Monomachos. The church of the katepan is decorated with wall paintings, while that of the emperor, appropriately, is lavishly adorned in a more expensive medium, mosaics.

The Panagia ton Chalkeon was a funerary church. The founder's grave was integrated with its structure from its very foundation.[5] The tomb was built into the base of the north wall of the northern crossarm and is clearly visible as a projection on the outside of the building. In a general sense, the arrangement of images within corresponds to the "classical system" of Demus. But, as Anna Tsitouridou has shown, several features of the church's decoration underlined its private funerary character. There was a dedicatory inscription on the triumphal arch of the apse, which read in part "... the katepan, together with his wife Maria, set up the house of prayer of the all-holy Mother of God for the redemption and remission of their faults."[6] The inscriptions on the scrolls held by the full-length portraits of the prophets in the drum of the dome were in many cases eschatological in character: the quotation from Zephaniah, for example, reads: "Wait upon me, saith the Lord, until the day of my resurrection."[7] The placement and selection of the scenes was also adjusted to the funerary function of the building. The entire narthex was given over to an extended portrayal of the Last Judgment, which included a prominent Deesis over the central doorway leading from the narthex into the nave.[8] Here the Virgin and St. John the Baptist interceded with the enthroned Christ on behalf of the dead. In this building, the paintings of the Last Judgment displaced some of the scenes of the earthly life of Christ, which in many middle Byzantine churches were displayed in the narthex. In the Katholikon at Hosios Loukas, for example, the Crucifixion and the Anastasis occupied two lunettes on the east wall of the narthex, flanking the door to the nave.[9] In the Panagia ton Chalkeon, on the other hand, these two scenes occupied a different location, namely, the barrel vault immediately above the tomb, in the north arm of the nave.[10] Since the association of the Crucifixion and the Anastasis with burials occurs elsewhere in Byzantine art,[11] the placement of these two scenes in the Panagia ton Chalkeon is additional evidence of the funerary character of the program.

The mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios have recently been the subject of an exhaustive monograph by Doula Mouriki, and can now be appreciated in a fashion that was not previously possible.[12] Nea Moni, of course, is one of three middle Byzantine churches in Greece that retain a substantial portion of their original mosaic decorations, the others being the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, and the church of Daphni. Each of these three churches has a different arrangement of the mosaics inside the building, corresponding to the differing demands of the architecture and the context of the foundation. The Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, for example, was built over the tomb of a monastic saint, whose relics were the center of a healing cult.[13] Accordingly, there was an emphasis on monks and healers among the saints depicted in the church. Pride of place was given to a portrait of the patron saint, which occupied a large lunette on the west wall of the north arm of the nave, over the location of his tomb, which was in the crypt. In this mosaic St. Luke was portrayed as a practitioner of spiritual medicine; his upraised hands represented the power of his prayers, which alone were sufficient to work cures on those who addressed their appeals to heaven through him.[14]

The circumstances surrounding the construction of Nea Moni were quite different from those

[3] K. Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien des XI. Jahrhunderts in der Kirche Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki*, ByzVindo 2 (Graz, 1966), 12–16.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 15.

[6] ... κατεπάνω ἅμα τῇ συμβίῳ αὐτοῦ Μαρίᾳ ἀνέστησαν εὐκτήριον τῆς Παναγίας Θεοτόκου ὑπέρ λύτρου καὶ ἀφέσεως τῶν ἐγκλημάτων αὐτῶν. A. Tsitouridou, "Die Grabkonzeption des ikonographischen Programms der Kirche Panagia Chalkeon in Thessaloniki," *JÖB* 32.5 (1982), 435–41, esp. 439.

[7] Ὑπόμεινόν με εἰς ἡμέρα ἀναστάσεώς μου. D. E. Evangelides, *Hē Panagia tōn Chalkeōn* (Thessaloniki, 1954), 48; Tsitouridou, "Die Grabkonzeption," 439.

[8] Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien*, 57–76, text fig. 5.

[9] Demus, *Mosaic Decoration*, figs. 13A, 19, 42.

[10] Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien*, 51; Tsitouridou, "Die Grabkonzeption," 441 note 33.

[11] For example, over the tomb of St. Neophytos on Cyprus; C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, "The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and Its Wall Paintings," *DOP* 20 (1966), 119–206, esp. 183–85, figs. 105–9.

[12] D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios* (Athens, 1985).

[13] C. L. Connor, *Art and Miracles in Medieval Byzantium: The Crypt at Hosios Loukas and Its Frescoes* (Princeton, 1991).

[14] Demus, *Mosaic Decoration*, fig. 18A.

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that applied to Hosios Loukas. The monastery was not built around the shrine of a holy man, in the same way as Hosios Loukas. It is true that Nea Moni possessed a miraculous icon of the Virgin,[15] and also a spring sacred to the Virgin, a *zōodochos pēgē;* but these were not the center of a cult as important as that at Hosios Loukas. The construction of the church at Nea Moni had a different impetus, namely, imperial interest and patronage. According to a tradition first published in the early nineteenth century, Nea Moni was founded by three hermits, Niketas, John, and Joseph, who engaged the interest of the future emperor Constantine Monomachos while he was still a nobleman living in exile on the nearby island of Mytilene. They prophesied to him that he would shortly ascend to the throne; at the same time they cannily extracted from Constantine a promise that, should their prophecy come true, he was to build for them a glorious shrine to the Virgin. In the event, their prophecy proved correct; Constantine gained the throne in 1042 and promptly fulfilled his promise by building them a church.[16] This tradition concerning the foundation of Nea Moni receives indirect confirmation from several other types of evidence. For example, the monk Gregorios, in his Life of St. Lazaros of Mount Galesios, records that an imposter monk went to Mytilene to prophesy to the exiled Constantine that he would become emperor.[17] For whatever reason, it is plain that Constantine Monomachos supported the monastery on Chios handsomely once he ascended the throne. There is a series of chrysobulls issued by Constantine in favor of the monastery, granting it income from public funds, the produce of estates, and even the proceeds of direct taxation;[18] a chrysobull dated July 1049 gave the monks the right to select a bishop for the consecration of their church.[19]

In addition to the granting of imperial funds, there are some more direct links between the church of Nea Moni and Constantinople. As Robert Ousterhout has shown, some of the architectural detailing of the church itself argues for the direct participation of builders from the empire's capital. For example, the best parallel for the arrangement of the windows on the exterior of the apse, with blind niches above them (Fig. 1), can be found at the Kilise Camii in Istanbul (Fig. 2).[20] This observation confirms a tradition of the monastery, recorded in the nineteenth century, that the church was constructed by masters who came from Constantinople.[21] Moreover, it is possible that the somewhat unusual overall design of the church at Nea Moni was similar to the famous church of St. George at the Mangana Palace in Constantinople, which was reconstructed and decorated at great expense by Constantine Monomachos in the early years of his reign.[22] Of the church at the Mangana, all that remains are the excavated substructures and the plan, as recorded in the 1920s by E. Mamboury (Fig. 3).[23] A curious feature of the plan of the Mangana church is the curving of the surfaces of the inner angles of the four piers that define the central square of the nave. These piers invite comparison with the four corner spaces of the nave at Nea Moni, which also have curved inner surfaces at their upper levels (Figs. 4 and 5). Basing his conclusions on this as well as on other features, Charalambos Bouras suggested that the church of St. George of the Mangana, like that of the Nea Moni, had eight niches under the main dome, a design which, as we shall see, would have had important consequences for the arrangement of the mosaics.[24]

It is impossible to say whether the mosaic decoration of Nea Moni was as closely tied to Constantinople as the architecture, because so little middle Byzantine mosaic work survives in the capital, with the exception of the imperial mosaics in the gallery of St. Sophia. We have a tantalizingly brief description by Psellos of the mosaics in the church of St. George of the Mangana. What little Psellos says about these imperially commissioned mosaics does accord with the general character of the mosaics at Nea Moni. The eleventh-century writer stresses the abundance of gold in the decoration of St. George of the Mangana: "As for the gold," he says, "it flowed from the public treasury like a stream splashing up from bounteous springs." Psellos

[15] C. Bouras, *Nea Moni on Chios* (Athens, 1982), 25.

[16] Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 22.

[17] Para. 230, *ActaSS*, Nov., III, 579; Bouras, *Nea Moni*, 27–28.

[18] F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches*, II (Munich, 1925), 5–11, nos. 861–62, 865, 892–93, 902, 913–14; Bouras, *Nea Moni*, 30–32.

[19] Dölger, *Regesten*, 8, no. 892; Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 28.

[20] I am very grateful to Professor Ousterhout for allowing me to draw on his work in progress. See his "Originality in Byzantine Architecture: The Case of Nea Moni," *JSAH* 51 (1992).

[21] C. Mango, "Les monuments de l'architecture du XIe siècle et leur signification historique et sociale," *TM* 6 (1976), 351–65, esp. 364 note 46.

[22] On the date, see ibid., 363 note 40.

[23] R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le quartier des Manganes* (Paris, 1939), 19–37, pl. 5.

[24] C. Bouras, Τυπολογικές παρατηρήσεις στό καθολικό τῆς Μονῆς τῶν Μανγάνων, Ἀρχ.Δελτ. 31.1 (1976), 136–51, fig. 9.

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compares the upper parts of the church to the vault of heaven, but complains that "whereas heaven itself is gilded with stars only at intervals, here gold was spread continuously over the whole surface, as if flowing from its center in a bounteous stream."[25] These observations would certainly fit the interior of the church of Nea Moni, if it was compared, for example, to the interior of the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas. At Hosios Loukas the areas of mosaic in the upper niches appear high up and small in relation to their architectural frame (Fig. 6). But at Nea Moni the proportions and the general effect are very different; the niches are lower and closer to the viewer, so that the impact of the gold mosaics within them is greater (Fig. 5). Above the niches and beneath the drum there is a wide band which was originally filled with a gold mosaic ground extending between the seraphim and the evangelists in the spandrels—a continuous circle of gold. Although some of the mosaics at Nea Moni are now lost, one can still see that their original effect must have been very similar to that of the decoration of St. George of the Mangana, a never-ending surface of gold. There was an association in the minds of the Byzantines between gold and imperial splendor. For example, Emperor Leo the Wise, describing the mosaics in the church of the Kauleas monastery in Constantinople, said that the artist made abundant use of gold, in order to endow the images with "such beauty as should clothe the emperor's entourage."[26]

Given these connections between the mosaics and architecture of Nea Moni and the capital, specifically with the patronage of Constantine Monomachos, it is reasonable to ask whether the imperial patronage is in any way reflected upon the choice and arrangement of scenes within the church, and upon their iconography. Paul Magdalino and Robert Nelson have drawn attention to a remarkable passage from an oration by Euthemios Malakes, which he delivered in the Great Palace to Manuel Komnenos in 1161.[27] This passage explicitly compares images of Christ's birth, passion, and resurrection to images of the emperor's deeds and triumphs. "Let me delineate the good emperor," says the orator, "by drawing an analogy . . . with the true and good God. Just as Christ the Savior of the world, although alone as liberator of all Christendom, is depicted in every town and is glorified in splendid festivals befitting his divinity, every icon displaying one of the miracles by which we are saved, one showing his unique birth, another his fearful passion, another his ineffable resurrection, and the rest of the mysteries of our salvation; in the same way my emperor, the imitation of my Christ, is one and (yet) shared over all the earth. The towns bear his images as teachers of the virtues by which he has saved the earthly order, and one may see him represented here as a founder of cities, there as a besieger bringing his brilliant triumphs to fulfillment, making captives of the foreigners, freeing those under their yoke. . . ."[28] For this Byzantine author, then, the scenes ("festivals") of the life of Christ appeared as parallels to images of imperial victories. A similar passage is found in a speech delivered by John Mauropous in the church of St. George of the Mangana on the occasion of its inauguration in 1047.[29] This oration was delivered in the presence of Emperor Constantine Monomachos and his retinue, who were gathered in the church. "O most orthodox of emperors," said John Mauropous, "raise your eyes now in a circle—for you most of all are responsible for the present wonders."[30] In this passage there

[25] Ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς ἀπὸ τῶν δημοσίων ταμιείων ὥσπερ ἐξ ἀφθόνων πηγῶν καχλάζοντι ἐπέρρει τῷ ῥεύματι. . . . τὸ μὲν αἰθέριον σῶμα ἐκ διαστημάτων κατακεχρύσωται, ἐκείνῳ δὲ ὁ χρυσὸς, ὥσπερ ἐκ κέντρου ῥυεὶς ἀφθόνῳ τῷ ῥεύματι, πᾶσαν ἀδιαστάτως ἀπέδραμεν ἐπιφάνειαν. *Chronographia,* 6.185–86, ed. E. Renauld, vol. II (Paris, 1928), 62.

[26] Εβουλήθη γὰρ ταῖς εἰκόσι τῇ τοῦ χρυσοῦ μίξει τοιοῦτον ἐνθεῖναι κάλλος, οἷον εἰκὸς ἀμφιέννυσθαι τοὺς βασιλέως πλησίον. Akakios, ed., Λέοντος τοῦ Σοφοῦ πανηγυρικοὶ λόγοι (Athens, 1868), 246; cited by H. Belting, *Bild und Kult* (Munich, 1990), 193.

[27] P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, "The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century," *BzyF* 8 (1982), 123–83, esp. 132–35.

[28] . . . ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ θεοῦ παραδειγματίσω τὸν ἀγαθὸν αὐτοκράτορα οἰκεῖον μάλα καὶ προσφυὲς ἀποδιδοὺς τὸ παράδειγμα, ὥσπερ ὁ κοσμοσώστης Χριστὸς εἷς ὢν αὐτὸς τῆς οἰκουμένης πάσης ὁ λυτρωτὴς ἑκασταχοῦ τῶν πόλεων εἰκονίζεται καὶ λαμπραῖς ὅτι μάλα θεοπρεπῶς κυδαί(νε)τ(αι) πανηγύρεσιν, ἄλλης τῶν εἰκόνων ἄλλο τι παρεμφαινούσης τῶν τεραστίων οἷσπερ σεσώσμεθα, τῆς μὲν τὸν καινὸν τόκον, τῆς δὲ τὸ φρικτὸν πάθος, τῆς δὲ τὴν ὑπὲρ λόγον ἀνάστασιν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας μυστήρια, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ὁ ἐμὸς βασιλεύς, τὸ τοῦ ἐμοῦ Χριστοῦ μίμημα, εἷς τέ ἐστι καὶ πανταχοῦ τῆς γῆς μεμέρισται· καὶ φέρουσι τούτου τὰς εἰκόνας αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἀρετῶν διδασκάλους, αἷς διεσώσατο τὸ περίγειον, καὶ ἴδοι τις ἂν αὐτὸν πολιοῦχον μὲν ἐνταῦθα, ἐκεῖσε δὲ πολιορκητὴν ἀνεστηλωμένον καὶ τελευτῶντα πρὸς λαμπρὰ τρόπαια, πῇ μὲν τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους αἰχμαλωτίζοντα, πῇ δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ χεῖρα λυτρούμενον. . . . A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, ed., *Noctes Petropolitanae* (St. Petersburg, 1913), 173; translation by Magdalino and Nelson, "The Emperor," 132–33.

[29] For the context of delivery, see J. Lefort, "Rhétorique et politique: Trois discours de Jean Mauropous en 1047," *TM* 6 (1976), 265–303.

[30] Ἄρον τοίνυν κύκλῳ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς σου, βασιλέων ὀρθοδοξότατε· σὺ γὰρ τῶν παρόντων θαυμάτων αἰτιώτατος μάλιστα. De Lagarde, ed., 140, no. 181.

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1 Nea Moni, Chios, apse

2 Kilise Camii, Istanbul, apse (photo: R. Ousterhout)

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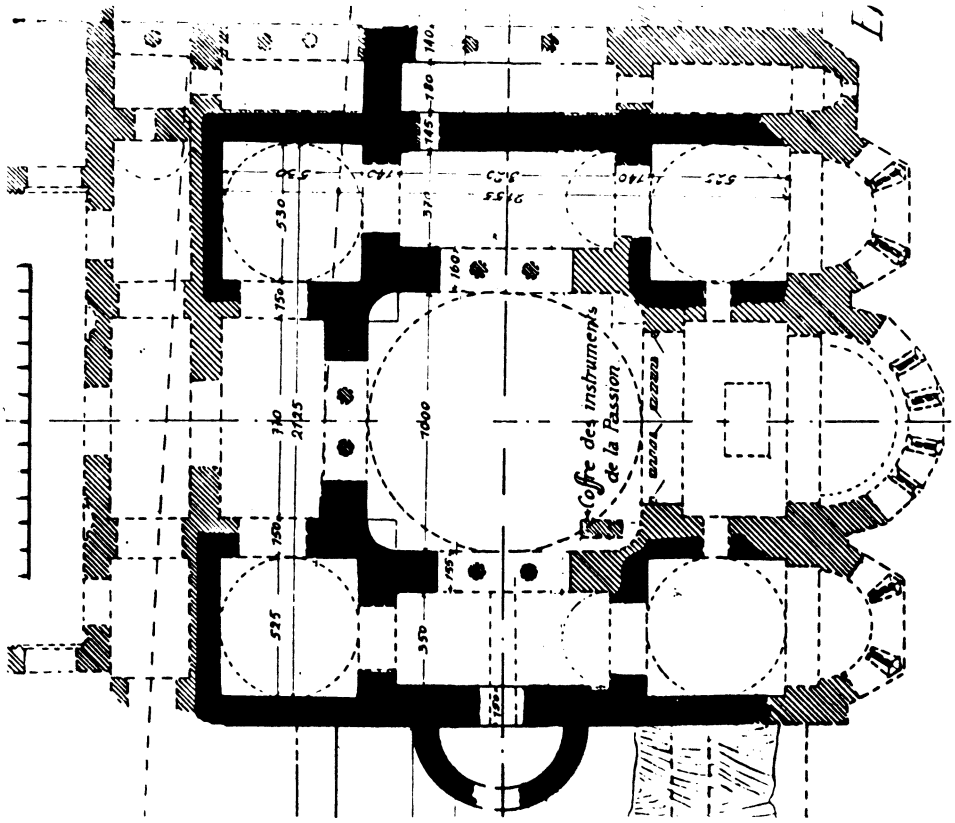
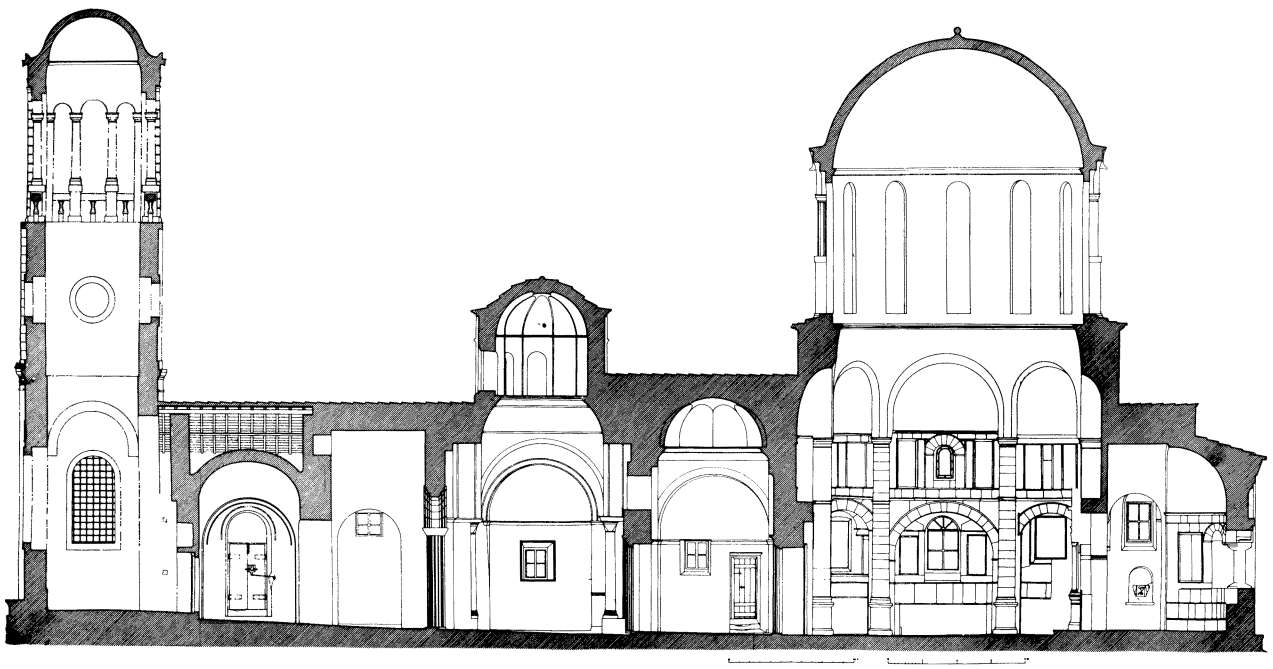


3 St. George of the Mangana, plan (photo: after R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le quartier des Manganes* [Paris, 1939], pl. 5)



4 Nea Moni, Chios, longitudinal section
(photo: after C. Bouras, *Nea Moni on Chios* [Athens, 1982], fig. 26)

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5 Nea Moni, Chios, north side of naos (photo: R. Ousterhout)

6 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, north side of naos (photo: R. Ousterhout)

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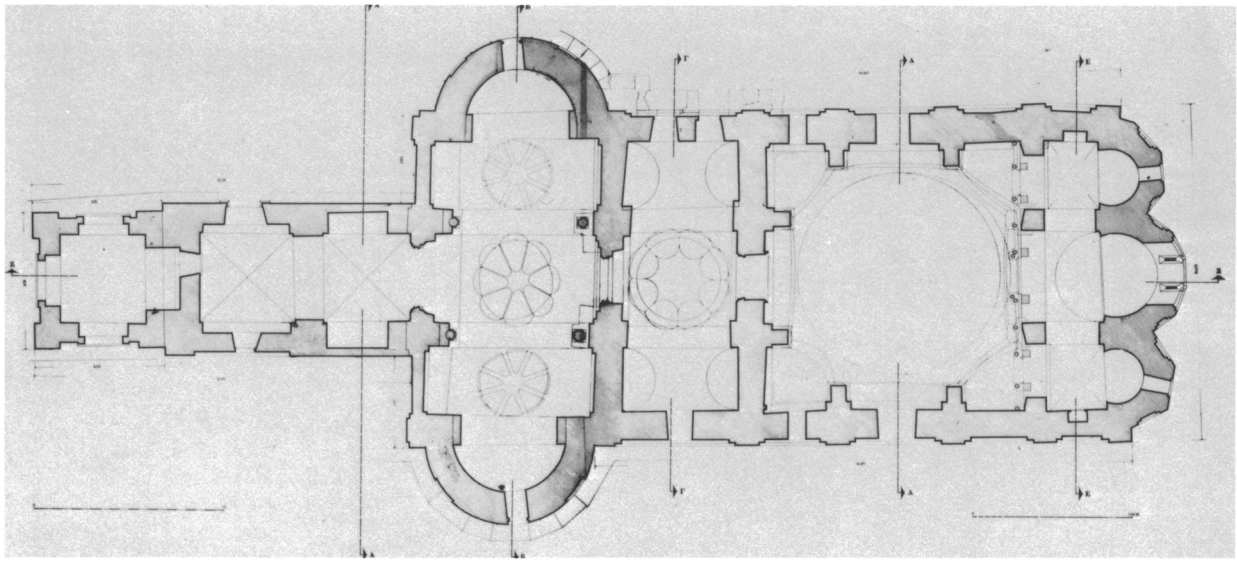

7 Nea Moni, Chios, ground plan (photo: after C. Bouras, fig. 25)

8 Nea Moni, Chios, mosaic in southern niche of naos. Baptism of Christ (photo: D. Mouriki)

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9 Nea Moni, Chios, mosaic in western niche of naos. Crucifixion
(photo: D. Mouriki)

10 Nea Moni, Chios, mosaic in northern niche of naos. Anastasis
(photo: D. Mouriki)

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11 Nea Moni, Chios, mosaics in dome of narthex. Virgin and martyrs (photo: D. Mouriki)

12 Sinai, ms. gr. 364, fol. 3. Constantine IX Monomachos, Zoe, and Theodora (photo: Library of Congress)

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was a characteristically Byzantine double meaning. The word "wonders" (θαύματα) could have referred to both the physical structure of the church with its mosaics, which surrounded the emperor in a circle, and to the christological scenes themselves, for this same word, "wonders," was used to describe the major feast scenes in other Byzantine descriptions of mosaics and paintings.[31] So when the orator said that Constantine was "responsible for" the wonders, he associated the emperor indirectly with the works of Christ that were depicted in the images. The orator returned to the idea that Christ and the emperor were partners, both as makers of the church and as rulers, when he continued: "And behold now gathered around you almost all your subjects. . . . all these who have run together with willing feet to the Holy Sion, . . . to your new Jerusalem, of which you and God are the makers and the craftsmen, and from which go forth justice and law. . ."[32] In this passage, then, we hear the orator comparing the emperor to Christ, albeit obliquely, in relation to a building decorated with a cycle of mosaics. Could such a comparison have been in the mind of the designer of the mosaics at Nea Moni?

In answering this question, I would like to concentrate on the scenes from the life of Christ displayed in the nave of the church,[33] and on the selection of saints portrayed in the narthex. In the church of Nea Moni, the drum of the main dome rests on eight niches which make the transition from the circular base of the drum to the square plan of the naos (Figs. 4 and 7). The geometry of the design dictates that the four niches on the cardinal axes should be wider and shallower than those on the diagonal axes. As a result, the niches on the cardinal axes are visually more prominent (Fig. 5). The wider niches were further stressed by the arrangement of the four evangelists and the four seraphim in the spandrels between the arches; the evangelists were placed in pairs to frame the wider niches on the north and south sides, and the angels served as pairs framing the wider niches on the east and west sides (Fig. 5). The designer, then, was faced with the question of which subjects were to take pride of place in the four key spaces. He chose to highlight four scenes, the Nativity, on the east, which is now lost, the Baptism, on the south (Fig. 8), the Crucifixion, on the west (Fig. 9), and the Anastasis on the north (Fig. 10). The niches on the diagonal axes were filled in with other scenes from the life of Christ arranged chronologically. Thus, in the northeast corner, to the left of the Nativity, the designer placed the Annunciation. Between the Nativity and the Baptism appeared the Presentation. Between the Baptism and the Crucifixion came the Transfiguration, and between the Crucifixion and the Anastasis was the Deposition.[34] In order to allow this cycle of eight scenes to conclude with the Anastasis in the large niche on the north side, the designer had to remove two very important scenes from the life of Christ, the Raising of Lazarus and the Entry into Jerusalem, and present them out of sequence in the narthex.[35] Two other scenes from the New Testament, the Ascension and the Pentecost, which chronologically follow the Anastasis, were also relegated to the narthex. The designer had the problem of finding a scene to fill in the niche between the Crucifixion and the Anastasis. This may explain why the Deposition was given an unusual prominence in this eleventh-century church by being included among the major events of Christ's earthly life.[36] Another odd feature of the mosaics is that the scene of the Dormition of the Virgin was absent, even though the monastery is dedicated to her.[37] The whole arrangement of the mosaics, then, was devised so as to emphasize four scenes at the expense of the others, namely, the Nativity, the Baptism, the Crucifixion, and the Anastasis, and in this respect the program differed from the mosaics of both Hosios Loukas and Daphni, as it did from the frescoes of the Panagia ton Chalkeon. Three of these scenes, of course, corresponded to the three principal feasts of the church calendar: Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter. But these scenes also corresponded to the three principal celebrations of the *imperial* liturgical calendar, and it is this aspect of them that will be explored here.[38]

According to Psellos, Constantine Monomachos

[31] For example, in *ekphraseis* by Constantine the Rhodian (ed. E. Legrand, "Description des oeuvres d'art et de l'église des Saints Apôtres de Constantinople," *REG* 9 [1896], 58, line 751) and John Mauropous (ed. De Lagarde, 6, no. 8, line 1).

[32] Καὶ ἴδε περὶ σὲ συνηγμένους πάντας ἤδη μικροῦ τοὺς ὑπὸ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν σὴν . . . πάντες οὗτοι συντρέχουσι ποσὶν αὐτομάτοις ἐπὶ τὴν Σιὼν τὴν ἁγίαν . . . τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ σου τὴν νέαν, ἧς θεός τε καὶ σὺ δημιουργοὶ καὶ τεχνῖται, ἀφ' ἧς ἐξελεύσεται δικαιοσύνη καὶ νόμος . . . De Lagarde, ed., 140, no. 181.

[33] On the Feast Cycle at Nea Moni, see, most recently, E. Kitzinger, "Reflections on the Feast Cycle in Byzantine Art," *CahArch* 36 (1988), 51–73, esp 57–58.

[34] Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* fig. 14–15, 24–31, 42–47.

[35] Ibid., figs. 90–93, 108–15.

[36] Ibid., 204.

[37] Ibid., 206.

[38] On the "intertwining of royal ceremony with the Christian liturgical year," see A. Cameron, "The Construction of Court Ritual: The Byzantine Book of Ceremonies," *Rituals of Royalty,* ed. D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987), 106–36, esp. 117.

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was conscientious in his performance of public ceremonials, even when he was unwell.[39] Unfortunately, we have no eleventh-century source that describes the imperial ceremonies of his time. Our best information about Byzantine imperial ceremonial comes from the tenth-century Book of Ceremonies by Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus and from a fourteenth-century treatise on imperial offices, the Pseudo-Kodinos. In the somewhat disorderly compilation of the Book of Ceremonies, the Nativity, Epiphany, and Easter receive special emphasis as the first feasts to be discussed in detail, in chapters two, three, and four of book one. The acclamations prescribed for these feasts present them as types of imperial victory. For example, in the instruction for a reception on the feast of the Nativity, the cantors of the greens are to chant: "Masters, may the very giver of life exalt your power in the whole world and may He subject all nations in servitude to you, so that they, like the Magi, will offer gifts to your majesties."[40] For a reception on the feast of Epiphany, the blues are to sing the following acclamation: "O benefactors, may He, who crushed the heads of dragons in the streams of the Jordan, crush the heads of the barbarians under your feet."[41] The acclamations of Easter day echo the language of the Epiphany chants, while including the Crucifixion as a sign of Christ's (and the emperor's) victory. On this feast the greens chant: "The one who has a timeless imperium with the Father, who associated at the end temporally with men on earth, who on the cross took Hades and Death captive and then after three days by his Resurrection renewed resurrection for the dead, may He exalt your power, O masters, with victories against the barbarians." Then, at a later reception, the blues follow with: "Today creation celebrates a double Easter festival of safety, seeing your scepter, O masters, rising together with the Resurrection of Christ."[42]

The same three feasts—Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter—are also singled out for detailed treatment in the book of imperial offices by Pseudo-Kodinos, although he adds to them extensive instructions for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and the feast of the Adoration of the Cross.[43] In Pseudo-Kodinos, the other feasts of the church year are treated in a much more summary fashion. This text gives a long description of the *prokypsis*,[44] which had possibly been instituted by the Comnenian period. The ceremony, a staged appearance of the emperor on a curtain-draped dais or platform, took place on the feasts of Christmas and Epiphany, and presented the ruler in Christlike fashion as a rising sun.[45]

We can discover more about how Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter were assimilated into imperial ritual and ideology by listening to the panegyrics delivered in court ceremonials on those festivals. A notable feature of the panegyrics is their use of imagery drawn from the Gospels; they turn the iconography of Christ's feasts into types of imperial victory. The Epiphany, especially, was an occasion for oratorical juxtapositions of Christ and the emperor. For example, in the early twelfth century Theodore Prodromos composed an Epiphany hymn for delivery by representatives of the demes to Emperor John II Komnenos. It presents a point-by-point comparison of the baptized Christ with the victorious emperor: "Behold! A double festival, a double joy for the Romans: the Baptism of Christ and the splendid trophies of the emperor. . . . The one crushes the heads of the serpents in the water, while the other bends the heads of the barbarians onto the ground. The one slays the lurking snakes, the other encloses in their dens the Persians who were formerly uncontrolled. The one is borne witness to by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, the other is announced by the white dove of victory. . . . I seem to hear a second voice from heaven crying again to the people: 'This is my emperor in whom I am well pleased! Him should you obey!' "[46]

[39] *Chronographia,* 6.129, ed. Renauld, II, 32–33.

[40] . . . ὁ ζωοδότης αὐτὸς τὸ κέρας ὑμῶν, δεσπόται, ἀνυψώσῃ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ, τὰ ἔθνη πάντα δουλώσῃ τοῦ προσφέρειν, ὡς οἱ μάγοι, τὰ δῶρα τῇ ὑμῶν βασιλείᾳ. *De ceremoniis,* 1.2, ed. A. Vogt, vol. I (Paris, 1935), 33.

[41] Ὁ κεφαλὰς τῶν δρακόντων, εὐεργέται, ἐν Ἰορδάνου τοῖς ῥεύμασι συντρίψας, πρὸ ποδῶν ὑμῶν συντρίψῃ τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν βαρβάρων. *De ceremoniis,* 1.3, ed. Vogt, I, 36.

[42] Ὁ ἀχρόνως τῷ Πατρὶ συμβασιλεύων ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις χρονικῶς συνανεστράφη, καὶ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τὸν ᾅδην καὶ θάνατον αἰχμαλωτίσας, τριημέρῳ αὐτοῦ ἐγέρσει τοῖς νεκροῖς τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἐγκαινίζων· αὐτὸς τὸ κέρας ὑμῶν, δεσπόται, ἀνυψώσῃ ταῖς νίκαις κατὰ βαρβάρων. . . . Ἡ κτίσις σήμερον ἑορτάζει διπλοῦν τὸ Πάσχα τῆς σωτηρίας, ὁρῶσα τὸ σκῆπτρον ὑμῶν, δεσπόται, τῇ ἀναστάσει Χριστοῦ συνανατέλλον. *De ceremoniis,* 1.4, ed. Vogt, I, 38–40.

[43] *Traité des offices,* ed. J. Verpeaux (Paris, 1966), 189–238.

[44] Ibid., 197–204.

[45] O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell* (Jena, 1938), 112–19; E. H. Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti—Lever du Roi," *DOP* 17 (1963), 119–77, esp. 159; Magdalino and Nelson, "The Emperor," 165–66.

[46] Ἰδοὺ διπλῆ πανήγυρις, διπλῆ χαρὰ Ρωμαίοις,
λουτρὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ τρόπαια λαμπρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως . . . .
Ὁ μὲν συντρίβει κεφαλὰς ἐν ὕδατι δρακόντων,
ὁ δὲ συγκλίνει κεφαλὰς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς βαρβάρων.
Ὁ μὲν τοὺς ἐμφωλεύοντας ὄφεις ἀποκτιννύει,

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Another comparison of Christ and emperor, with an even more specific contemporary reference, is found in an Epiphany speech by John Diogenes, delivered in the imperial palace at mid-century to the successor of John II, Manuel I Komnenos. "I may recognize you, my most dashing emperor, as an imitator of Christ," says the orator, "for Christ also drove away the satanic legions and phalanxes and enclosed them in the underwater caverns and abysses. . . . So now, you, the stout hand and winner of great victories, have lately smitten all the armies and all the tribes of the barbarians, and have drowned them beside the very abysses of the Danube."[47]

Christmas, also, was an occasion for the drawing of such parallels between the emperor and Christ. Again Theodore Prodromos, in verses composed for the demes to address to John II Komnenos, provides an eloquent example: "Once more," he says, "[we celebrate] the birthday of Christ and the victory of the emperor. The birth of the one inspires awe, the victory of the other is irresistible. Again God has been seen [coming] out of Teman, bearing flesh, and the emperor has entered out of Teman, bearing victory. The star of God announces His Advent to the Magi, but the *many* stars of his trophies declare the emperor. One of them has three Persians doing obeisance to Him as He lies in His crib; the other has *all* of Persia bending its neck under his feet. . . . Both of them regenerate the whole of creation . . . both defeat all the barbarians, destroy cities, increase the boundaries of New Rome, and become the saviors of the Christian clergy."[48]

Easter, likewise, was honored by the delivery of imperial panegyrics, such as the oration of John Mauropous, already mentioned, which he gave before Constantine Monomachos in the church of St. George of the Mangana. This speech was actually delivered two days after Easter, and a couple of days before the feast of St. George, on the twenty-third of April.[49] It therefore celebrated at the same time the victory of Christ over death and the victories of the martyr St. George.[50] Another oration, composed by John Mauropous for the same occasion, praised the victories of the emperor over his barbarian enemies.[51]

The fourth major christological scene at Nea Moni, the image of Christ on the cross, also had a clear relevance to imperial ideology and ceremonial. The cross was, of course, the preeminent sign of imperial victory. One has only to recall, for example, instructions given in the Book of Ceremonies for the afternoon races in the Hippodrome: "After the second race, the carriers of the crosses descend from their four demes, carrying crosses wreathed with flowers. And the couriers stand in the *stama,* and, taking the aforesaid crosses, take them up to the emperors, and immediately begin the acclamations. The chanters call out: 'O divine sign [of the cross], help the emperors!' The people likewise three times. . . . The chanters call: 'By it you rule and conquer!' And the people likewise three times. The chanters call: 'By it you will destroy all the pagan nations!' And the people likewise three times."[52]

In the Book of Ceremonies the relic of the True Cross kept at St. Sophia was the focus of important

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ὁ δὲ συγκλείει φωλεοῖς τοὺς πρὶν ἀνέτους Πέρσας.
Τὸν μὲν τὸ πνεῦμα μαρτυρεῖ περιστερᾶς ἐν εἴδει,
τὸν δ' ἡ λευκὴ περιστερὰ τῆς νίκης καταγγέλλει. . . .
Δοκῶ φωνῆς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δευτέρας ἐπακούειν
βοώσης πάλιν τοῖς λαοῖς "Οὗτος ὁ βασιλεύς μου,
οὗτος εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησα, τούτῳ καὶ πειθαρχεῖτε".

W. Hörandner, ed., *Theodoros Prodromos, historische Gedichte,* WByzSt 11 (Vienna, 1974), 248–49, no. 10; PG 133, col. 1390A–B. Cf. Matt. 3:17. On the occasion of delivery, see Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos,* 80–82.

[47] . . . νεανικώτατε βασιλεῦ. . . . Χριστοῦ γνωρίσω σε μιμητήν, ἐπεὶ καὶ Χριστὸς . . . λεγεῶνας . . . καὶ φάλαγγας ἀπορραπίζει σατανικὰς καὶ τὰς ἀβύσσους αὐταῖς καὶ τὴν εἱρκτὴν πληροῦται τὴν ὑποβρύχιον. . . . Ὁ τοίνυν ἀριστόχειρ καὶ μεγαλόνικος ἔναγχος στυφελίξας πανστρατιὰς βαρβάρων καὶ πανεθνίας καὶ παρ' αὐτὰς ἀβύσσους Δανούβεως καταποντώσας αὐτάς. . . . *Fontes rerum byzantinarum,* ed. V. E. Regel, with foreword by A. P. Kazhdan (Leipzig, 1982), pp. xv, 305.

[48] Πάλιν γενέθλιον Χριστοῦ καὶ νίκη βασιλέως,
φρικῶδες τὸ γενέθλιον, ἀπρόσμαχος ἡ νίκη.
Πάλιν θεὸς ἀπὸ Θαιμὰν ὡράθη σαρκοφόρος
καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀπὸ Θαιμὰν εἰσῆλθε νικηφόρος.
Ἀστὴρ θεοῦ τὴν ἔλευσιν τοῖς μάγοις καταγγέλλει,
τὸν δ' ἄνακτα μηνύουσιν ἄστρα πολλὰ τροπαίων.
Τὸν μὲν ἐν φάτνῃ κείμενον τρεῖς προσκυνοῦσι Πέρσαι,
τοῦ δ' ὑπὸ πόδας κλίνουσι πᾶσα Περσὶς αὐχένα. . . .
Ἀμφότεροι τὴν ἅπασαν ἀναγεννῶσι κτίσιν . . .
τροποῦνται πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον καὶ πόλεις καθαιροῦσι
καὶ τοὺς τῆς Ῥώμης σχοινισμοὺς αὐξάνουσι τῆς νέας
καὶ σωτηρία γίνονται τῷ Χριστωνύμῳ κλήρῳ.

Hörandner, ed., 244–45, no. 9; PG 133, col. 1387.

[49] Lefort, "Jean Mauropous," 271.

[50] De Lagarde, ed., 137–39, no. 181.

[51] Ibid., 143–46, no. 182.

[52] Χρὴ δὲ εἰδέναι ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ δευτέρου βαΐου κατέρχονται ἀπὸ τῶν δ΄ δήμων οἱ σταυροφόροι, βαστάζοντες τοὺς ἐξ ἀνθέων πεπλεγμένους σταυρούς, καὶ ἵστανται εἰς τὸ στάμα οἱ κούρσωρες, αἴροντες τοὺς τοιούτους σταυροὺς ἀναφέρουσι πρὸς τοὺς δεσπότας, καὶ εὐθέως λέγουσιν τὰ ἄκτα. Οἱ κράκται· "Ὁ θεῖος τύπος, βοήθησον τοὺς δεσπότας." Ὁ λαὸς ἐκ γ΄ ὁμοίως. . . . Οἱ κράκται "Ἐν τούτῳ βασιλεύετε καὶ νικᾶτε." Καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐκ γ΄ ὁμοίως. Οἱ κράκται· "Ἐν τούτῳ ὀλέσετε τὰ ἔθνη πάντα." Καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐκ γ΄ ὁμοίως. *De ceremoniis,* 1.78, ed. Vogt, II, 131.

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ceremonies on the feast of the Elevation of the Cross, which included an appearance of the emperor before the senate for acclamations.[53] From some panegyrical verses penned by John Mauropous, we learn of the significance of a true cross relic in the court of Constantine Monomachos. The poem, which has the title "On the emperor's reliquary of the Honored Wood," was possibly inscribed upon the reliquary itself. It reads: "Once more, [here is] the light of the cross. Once more, [here is] Constantine. The first Constantine saw the type of the cross in the stars. The second Constantine (i.e., Constantine Monomachos) sees this very cross, and holds it, revered, in faithful hands. Both received from it power, both revere it as a benefactor."[54]

In sum, then, the episodes from the life of Christ that received emphasis at Nea Moni were also ones that were important in imperial liturgies and panegyrics, or that had a particular relevance to imperial victory. The converse is also true. It has been seen that the Dormition of the Virgin was not illustrated at all at Nea Moni, in spite of the dedication of the church to the Virgin. In several other eleventh-century churches, however, this feast appeared prominently. In the Panagia ton Chalkeon, for example, the death of the Virgin was shown on the west wall of the nave,[55] for the subject was especially appropriate in a funerary church. But this was a feast that received relatively little attention in the imperial ceremonials. In the tenth-century Book of Ceremonies, the Dormition has no associated acclamations to the emperor.[56] In Pseudo-Kodinos it is dismissed summarily in one sentence.[57] The Virgin did receive her due in the mosaics at Nea Moni, but in an arrangement that associated her more closely with imperial victory than the feast of the Dormition would have done. She was portrayed in a medallion at the summit of the pumpkin dome that crowned the center of the narthex, while surrounding her eight martyrs, of whom half were soldiers, stood in the gores (Fig. 11). This arrangement was highly unusual, for in all other instances in Byzantine art in which the Virgin occupied the summit of a cupola, she was surrounded not by warriors and other martyrs, but by prophets and patriarchs, or, on occasion, by angels.[58] As Doula Mouriki has pointed out, the combination of the Virgin with the martyrs calls to mind portable icons, on which she was sometimes accompanied by military saints, among others.[59] The Virgin was invoked as an aid in battle in a short anonymous epigram, which described an icon made on the orders of Constantine Monomachos himself. The icon is lost, but, to judge from the language of the poem, it possibly showed Mary in the company of military saints, in the same manner as the narthex dome of Nea Moni. The epigram, which may originally have been written on the icon itself, has the following title in the manuscript that preserves it: "To the icon of the unfightable Theotokos, which Constantine Monomachos the Emperor has set up. The verses are from the lips of the icon." The verses, in their entirety, read: "Fight, O lone fighter (i.e., Monomachos), with me the unfightable one (i.e., the Virgin) as a fellow fighter in your fights."[60]

There is another aspect of the feast scenes at Nea Moni which is relevant in the context of imperial patronage, namely, their iconography. In the case of the last of the four major feast mosaics, the Anastasis, several scholars have already recognized an imperial reference in the person of King Solomon, the right-hand of the two figures rising from the sarcophagus on the left (Fig. 10). In Byzantine art Solomon usually appeared clean-shaven, but here he was shown heavily bearded. It has been suggested, therefore, that in this case Sol-

[53] Ibid., 1.31, ed. Vogt, I, 116–18.

[54] Εἰς τὴν θήκην τοῦ τιμίου ξύλου τοῦ βασιλέως.

Σταυροῦ πάλιν φῶς, καὶ πάλιν Κωνσταντῖνος.
ὁ πρῶτος εἶδε τὸν τύπον δι' ἀστέρων,
ὁ δεύτερος δὲ τοῦτον αὐτὸν καὶ βλέπει,
καὶ χερσὶ πισταῖς προσκυνούμενον φέρει.
ἄμφω παρ' αὐτοῦ τὸ κράτος δεδεγμένοι,
ἄμφω σέβουσιν αὐτὸν ὡς εὐεργέτην.

De Lagarde, ed., 34, no. 58.

[55] Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien,* 53–54. For other examples, see Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 206.

[56] *De ceremoniis,* 2.9, ed. I. I. Reiske, Bonn ed. (1829), I, 541–44.

[57] Verpeaux, ed., 245.

[58] Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 147–48.

[59] Ibid. For such an icon, see A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen,* II (Berlin, 1934), 49, no. 78, pl. 31.

[60] Εἰς τὴν εἰκόνα τῆς ἀκαταμαχήτου Θεοτόκου ἣν κατεσκεύασε Κωνσταντῖνος Βασιλεὺς ὁ Μονομάχος. Εἰσὶ δὲ οἱ στίχοι ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς εἰκόνος.

Τὴν ἀκαταμάχητον, ὦ Μονομάχε,
ἐν ταῖς μάχαις ἔχων με σύμμαχον μάχου. S. P. Lampros, ed., Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524, Νέος Ἑλλ. 8 (1911), 7, no. 10; the poem is cited by Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 26.

[61] Ms. gr. 364, fol. 3 (Homilies of John Chrysostom); Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 137–38. See also A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), 216. On the portrait in the manuscript, see I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 99–102.

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omon's features may have been intended to resemble those of Constantine Monomachos, the builder of Nea Moni, as seen in his portrait in a manuscript of 1042 at Mount Sinai (Fig. 12).[61] As Robert Ousterhout has recently emphasized, such an assimilation would have been a fitting tribute to the founder, who saw himself as a New Solomon, the rebuilder of the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.[62]

An imperial bias of a less specific kind may be present in the mosaic of the Crucifixion. Here the viewer's eye is drawn by the prominently placed figure of the centurion on the right, dressed in the Arabic fashion in a turban, recognizing the triumph of the cross (Fig. 9). It must be stressed that the composition was not unique; there were many other middle Byzantine Crucifixion scenes in which this turbaned soldier appears.[63] But he was not a *necessary* part of the iconography; artists were at liberty to omit both him and the mourning women on the left, as they did, for example, in the mosaics of Hosios Lukas and Daphni.[64] On the other hand, in this particular foundation, this type of Crucifixion scene was particularly apposite, for it showed the soldier acknowledging the power of the cross, the talisman of imperial victory. Perhaps for this reason the designer took care not to leave the centurion out of the picture.

In summary, it has been seen that Nea Moni was funded by Constantine Monomachos, and that the architectural design of its church may have been related to that of the church of St. George that the same emperor reconstructed at the Mangana palace in Constantinople. The context, therefore, invites viewers, both now and in the eleventh century, to see the mosaics from an imperial perspective. It has also been seen that the selection and arrangement of the images supports this reading. The feasts that were emphasized in this church were the most important in the Byzantine imperial liturgies; feasts that were less important in imperial ceremonial, such as the Dormition, were omitted. The portrayal of the Virgin's death was replaced by a more military composition of the Virgin ringed by warrior saints and other martyrs. Finally, the iconography of the individual scenes was also appropriate for an imperial interpretation. This is not to deny, of course, that these scenes could have been read in other ways. Byzantine images were polyvalent, and purposefully so. Nevertheless, imperial patronage did leave its mark on the mosaics of Nea Moni, in a bias that was subtle but probably recognizable to anyone familiar with imperial rhetoric and ceremonial.[65]

At this point an objection needs to be answered, for some readers may be asking themselves whether any of the monks of Chios could indeed have been familiar with the ceremonies of the court at Constantinople. As it happens, it is known that in the mid-eleventh century, at the time when their church was built, some of the monks from Nea Moni were closely involved—one might say too closely involved—with court life in the capital. According to chrysobulls of 1046 and 1048, the monks of Nea Moni were granted imperial residences in Constantinople by the emperor and an allowance to go with them.[66] Moreover, we know that at least two of the original founders of the monastery, Niketas and John, gained access to the inner circles of the patriarchate, where they were later accused of exerting a sinister influence on the patriarch, Michael Keroularios. Evidently their activities and influence at the capital aroused considerable enmity. After the death of their protector, Constantine Monomachos, in 1055, they were accused during the reign of Theodora of impiety and pagan divination. They were sent briefly into exile, and the extensive property of their monastery may have been confiscated.[67] But a few years later, in the reign of Isaac Komnenos, the former standing of the monastery was restored.[68] No doubt the specific charges were trumped up, but they show how the monks of Chios insinuated

[62] R. Ousterhout, "Rebuilding the Temple: Constantine Monomachos and the Holy Sepulchre," *JSAH* 48 (1989), 66–78, esp. 78. See also Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 137–38.

[63] Mouriki, *Mosaics of Nea Moni,* 131.

[64] E. Diez and O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), pl. 13, fig. 99.

[65] In this respect, the Nea Moni can now be seen as a Byzantine model for such western programs as the mosaics of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, where the christological imagery was also "a paean to the king," but in a much more concrete and less ambiguous fashion. As in the Nea Moni, the planner of the mosaics in the Cappella Palatina omitted the Dormition; he replaced it with the Flight into Egypt, "a scene of triumphal advent that would have special appeal for the king." See E. Kitzinger, "Mosaic Decoration in Sicily under Roger II and the Classical Byzantine System of Church Decoration," in *Italian Church Decoration of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance,* ed. W. Tronzo (Bologna, 1989), 147–65, esp. 158.

[66] Dölger, *Regesten,* 7–8, nos. 878, 887; Bouras, *Nea Moni,* 26.

[67] On the tangled history of the affair, see Bouras, *Nea Moni,* 26–27. The principal source is the accusation of Michael Keroularios by Psellos: L. Bréhier, ed., "Un discours inédit de Psellos," *REG* 16 (1903), 375–416; E. Kurtz and F. Drexl, eds., *Michaelis Pselli scripta minora,* I (Milan, 1936), 232–328.

[68] Bouras, *Nea Moni,* 26–27; Dölger, *Regesten,* 13, no. 945.

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themselves into the inner circles of court life, where they succeeded first in attracting the lavish patronage of Emperor Constantine, and then, after his death, the revenge of their rivals. The builders of the church of Nea Moni, then, were not provincial ascetics but worldly courtiers, evidently well versed in the sophisticated arts of flattery and ingratiation that won them imperial largess. It is, therefore, not inappropriate to see the mosaics of Nea Moni as a panegyric, celebrating the glory of two masters at the same time, Christ and the emperor, the new Constantine, the new Solomon, and the author of wonders.

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